

three weeks' wages in lieu of notice, and £59 19s. 8d., the difference between the wages of an apprentice and an improver, may be paid to him.

I am directed to report that the Committee entirely concurs with the reports on this petition in 1884 and 1885, and considers that the petitioner, having already been liberally dealt with, has no further claim against the colony.

13th July, 1886.

---

No. 298.—Petition of E. L. CLARKE, of Auckland.

THE petitioner prays that an inquiry may be made into his case, and that rule No. 267 of the Supreme Court may be altered, so that the Judge should not have the power to nonsuit a plaintiff and discharge the jury without giving the plaintiff the benefit of the verdict of a jury for which he has paid.

I am directed to report that the Committee, having considered the petition and the report from the department thereon, is of opinion that the petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

13th July, 1886.

---

No. 112.—Petition of SIMON CHISHOLM, of Pahiatua.

THE petitioner, a contractor, states that in 1883, during a flood in the Manawatu River, some buildings which he had erected were washed away; that he erected a new building worth £20 on a site pointed out to him by the Inspector of Bridges, Mr. Mackay; that he had to leave his work owing to ill-health, and on his return found that the Natives had removed his building, with his plant, and furniture inside, to their own land; that he has been informed the Natives took possession with the full consent and concurrence of the Native Office. He prays for relief.

I am directed to report that, in the opinion of this Committee, the petitioner has no claim against the colony.

13th July, 1886.

---

No. 314.—Petition of J. McRAE, C. H. HUMPHREYS, and J. BIRD.

THE petition sets forth that the petitioners have been residents at Te Wairoa for some years; that J. McRae was the owner of an hotel, store, and bakery; C. H. Humphreys of a boarding-house and store; and John Bird of a waggon and team of horses; that on the 10th June, 1886, a volcanic eruption took place, completely destroying their petitioners' hotels and stores; that for the following three days they were engaged in saving life and searching for bodies; that on the 13th June, when the petitioners attempted to rescue some of their own property, the roads had become impassable; that a party of men was organized by the Government Agent to go and recover property, but the men were ordered back by Dr. Hector; that the goods which had been excavated were pillaged by Natives; that this might have been in a great measure prevented if a special constable had been placed on the bridge at Rotokakahi, over which was the only means of access to Wairoa; that the loss sustained by J. McRae amounts to £4,000 sterling, by C. H. Humphreys to £2,000, and by J. Bird to £70. They pray for relief.

I am directed to report that, while the Committee do not consider that parties who have suffered losses owing to volcanic eruptions have any claim against the colony for compensation, still, taking into consideration the fact, as shown by the evidence, that the petitioners would have been able to save a considerable portion of their property on the days immediately after the eruption had they devoted their energies to that object instead of to saving and endeavouring to save life, the Committee recommend that their case receive the favourable consideration of the Government when putting a sum on the estimates to relieve the sufferers by the recent calamity.

15th July, 1886.

---

No. 212.—Petition of MONTGOMERY DAVIES.

THE petitioner states that a sale by auction under a distress warrant was granted in June, 1883, to a Mr. Corley against a Mr. McCormick; that he bought a horse at said sale for £13 10s., but six months afterwards Mr. McCormick took action against a Mr. Furey, a hotel-proprietor, in whose stable the horse was when seized; that judgment was given against Mr. Furey for the price of the horse—£25—and £6 10s. costs; that an order of the Court was applied for to compel petitioner to give up the horse or pay £31 10s. to Mr. Furey; that he refused to give up the horse, and was compelled to pay said amount; that the horse has since died. He prays for relief.

I am directed to report that, as the claim of the petitioner does not appear to have ever been before the Government, it should be referred to them for consideration.

15th July, 1886.

---

No. 279.—Petition of C. L. KASPER and Others.

THE petitioners, shipowners in Auckland, pray that the law may be altered, so that all vessels, whether foreign or coastwise, shall be compelled to produce vouchers for payment of all wharfage and harbour dues before being allowed to clear at the Customs.

I am directed to report that the Committee are of opinion that forcing masters of vessels in the home-trade to enter and clear at the Customs every trip would greatly restrict their freedom of trade; but would recommend that masters should be obliged to produce receipts for wharfage and harbour dues when applying for a clearance for a specified period under general transire.

15th July, 1886.